





Medical.

T<sup>HE</sup>

USE AND ABUSE

OF

STIMULANTS.

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In spite of the awful logic of experience, and in defiance of prohibitory statutes, the propensity to overindulgence in stimulants is more prevalent in the United States to-day than it was ever seen at any former period. There is a statist that will which the well-known of pharmacopœia mention, however much he may regret it; and it proves one of two things—either that the vice is past remedy or mitigation, or that the stringent laws adopted to prevent the evil and use of stimulants have been unwise and徒劳的. Human nature is not so logically vicious as to be beyond the influence of reason and prudence; however obstinate it may be to the resistance to arbitrary and unconstitutional laws. The intercessors, however, in their efforts, who have declared uncompromising war against the use of liquor under any circumstances, have outraged the mass, and severely increased the evil they intended to crush out. The United States now authorizes the importation, manufacture and sale of opium; and the Government carries a large revenue from such imports, which manufacturers outlast. And while this is the case, no law can ever prevent the use of the article. The statute which imposes tax and duty on liquor, recognizes that it will be used, and recognizes the right of the people to eat it. That right is denied by the prohibitors, and they make by law to prevent the offense from exacting a pecuniary privilege granted to buy—by implements at least—by the law of the land.

This is the whole case in a nutshell; and it is in this sense the *Mine Law*, and every other enactment of this class, have proved dead failure.

Every good man admits that intoxication is a terrible vice—but trifled parent of every species of crime. But it does not follow that alcoholism should always be abominated. When time out, and when because of one of the most important departments of medical art? Only ignoramus or mean when better judgment is warped by practice, will attempt to deny that there are saved daily by the timely administration of stimulants, as a restraining and restorative agent. It is the bane of all the tissues of the pharmacopœia, and has preserved the lives of thousands on the battle-field, in military and other hospitals, and in private practice. What then, medical science would be like without it? Without it, medical science would be like the *Phaenomena* of Boëcious, the part of the hero omitted. Most especially is this true of a *Puer Natus* or *Catarracta*. Unquestionably, the gouties, of the *Nasal*, *Neuritic*, would like to dispense all medicated preparations containing alcohol. They would probably begin with *BORISTERINE STOMACH BITTERS*, reported to be the most powerful restorative and alterative of the day. They would dispense the aqueous tincture of the death and West of this powerful specific. They would use the traveler in the Valley of the Mississippi, or the mites in the plagues and cauces of California, or the voyager about to sail for the insalubrious coast of Maine or the West Indies, and demand the subduing of this great antidote to寒症, and productive against the effects of unwholesome water, if he happened to be provided with it. Nay, they would probably far rather than, had, destroy the great faculty at Princeton, where it is prepared, and every testis or its worth, which they could by their hands throughout the length and breadth of the land. It would be pitiful to theorize that the article was manufactured from the parent of all known effusive oiliness, and the most violent of medicinal herbs and roots. "Away with it! away with it!" they would cry; "it distresses, sickens, and they would be destroyed."

But this is the language of insane bigotry. Religion, strict science—arm, and enlightened Religion and Medicine, too,—exist not in itself. Being elsewhere, the Reverend Dr. Worcester, and other great divines, have recently given their testimony against entire wholesale hostility to stimulants, and have declared that the vice of drunkenness has been greatly increased by the interministering malcontents of the prohibitors. The great Agnostics, and such men as Presidents Webster and Jackson, together with Drs. Bigelow, Clark, Holmes, White, and many other eminent practitioners, whose standing as physicians should secure respect for their opinions on a point like this, have stated that stimulant preparations are absolutely essential to the treatment of many diseases. They only insist that the preparation be *safe*. They are in favor of *ergotides* kept against adulteration; their motto is "*BERISTERINE, our mother!*"

And this is the true policy, dictated either by philosophy, experience and common sense. What, on the other hand, is the tendency of the policy of prohibition? It does not prevent. If it were so prevented, it never can prevent the sale of absolute drunks; less is less to their *metamorphosis*, and thus increases a thousandfold the evils that it proposes to annihilate. When heroes are sold, surely, and at the risk of personal liberty, of course the dealers will seek to encompass themselves for the hazards they incur by to cultivate profits; and to obtain these profits, they will adulterate what they sell. It is notorious that the liquor still in states where prohibition laws exist for the most part exists. It is as well for the vendor to give his customers a fiery and destructive drug as a good article—the penalty being in each case the same. Strict and faithfully enforced taxation would prevent *some* home manufacture. Prohibition laws promote it. It is well known that most of the liquor recently distilled in New York, Brooklyn, and elsewhere, for evasion of the Government tax, has been of the client-variety. The manufacturers, in view of the possibility of seizure, have got up the contraband article as the last position of safety, in order that their lips, in case of discovery, might be compelled to seal. The leading of the public health demands that such pernicious stuff be destroyed; and under a proper system of laws, if people be condemned and thrown into the dock. But so, if it is sold by the circumlocution, as the average rate of about \$10 a gallon, to pay the tax. In this way *absolute* liquor is distributed inexpensively among the people. The whole system of legislation, bearing upon the liquor trade in this country, is strength not so situated, to *tax* *or* *curb* *or* *exterminate*. A moderate excise and vice sanitary laws, in relation to the testing of all distilled and fermented beverages, are the best safeguards against the great evil which all ranking men deplore, but for which few have the wisdom and boldness to propose any remedial measures with reason and firmness on a proper appreciation of the waste and weakness of human nature. What a pity it is that prodded confidence will attempt to nerve, when their true policy would be to *pluck* *strangle* and *exterminate*. All patriotic clause would be glad, if they could sweep out of the trade and commerce of the country the rascals—bad-minding, foolish that are now sold in every public grocery and every aerosol den of disreputability, with a like rise to use desire at the present products of the craft and still.

The question is, How shall it be done? And the reply of every right-thinking man is, By a right measure of the article, and the influence of heavy taxation, pecuniary and personal, in all cases where adulteration is detected. If it will be shown that the *coke* *aceto-vinegar* and the dealer *do* *know* *what* *he* *sells*, that should only be held to the same responsibility by the authorities? And yet this is the case under the present system of laws.

There are many forms of diffusive stimuli used by the medical profession; and the great object of the trustworthy physician is to obtain those modified with any deleterious article. *BORISTERINE STOMACH BITTERS*, as already observed, has the reputation of being the parent preparation of an elixir of power manufactured, and was therefore once in use in periods. It is now, as it is, in the *new* *prepared* *good* of the greatest number, that the law should place the valuable medicine on a par with "*lightning rods*." What sort of legislation is that which makes no distinction between a life-giving tonic and a corrosive and a life-destroying herb? Truly, we trust Congress and our State Legislatures have much to learn upon this important subject, and the sooner they begin to profit by the past example of the law the better it will be for the moral and physical health of the people. Under the present system of legislation, Congress and short-sighted General and State laws affecting the liquor question, *intemperance*, with all its attendant miseries, is an evil to increase and multiply as the sun is to generate steam from a swamp, or *death* to grow cancer by feeding it with impurities. The article has been often discussed in a single article, and will be well reprinted in these columns, with a view to show more light upon it. *"Intemperance in all things" is unadvisable;* and if it is not true that the *use* is a *good*, *causes* *no* *concern* *very* *unnecessary*.

